

REMARKS

Claims 1-17, 19 and 20 currently appear in this application. The Office Action of April 11, 2008, has been carefully studied. These claims define novel and unobvious subject matter under Sections 102 and 103 of 35 U.S.C., and therefore should be allowed. Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration, entry of the present amendment, and formal allowance of the claims.

Interview Summary

Applicant's attorney wishes to thank Examiner Brinson for the courtesies extended during the personal interview of July 2, 2008. During that interview it was emphasized that it is not possible to cement a pigmented MFA or PFA because the pigment changes the character of the polymer. The claims have been amended to recite that the surface of the inner layer on which the outer layer is mounted is roughened by defluorination of that surface. It is this roughening by defluorination that makes it possible to cement the surface of the fluoropolymer to the outer layer of the tube.

Art Rejections

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mang, US 5,573,039 in view of Vassiliou et al., US 4,145,325.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. The claims have been amended to recite that the surface of the inner layer is roughened by at least partial defluorination prior to cementing the inner layer to the outer layer. Support for this amendment can be found in original claim 18 and in the specification as filed at page 7, third full paragraph. The specification notes that pigmented fluorinated polymer cannot successfully be cemented, at the paragraph bridging pages 3 and 4. Without a cementing process, a multilayer tube cannot be produced.

Mang discloses a multilayer tube in which one layer is a fluoropolymer. However, this layer is not pigmented, so there is no need to roughen the surface of the fluoropolymer layer in order to produce a multilayer tube. Vassiliou adds nothing to Mang, as Vassiliou discloses merely that pigmented fluorocarbons can be used for producing top-coated pipes. In this case, the pipe to be coated is roughened by grit-blasting, flame-spraying, or frit-coating the pipe prior to applying the pigmented fluoropolymer coating. However, the presently claimed tube is produced by roughening the surface

of the inner layer of the tube, and then applying cement to this surface to enable the inner layer to be cemented to an outer layer. Moreover, a mechanically roughened surface of the inner layer would not be amenable to cementing. For this reason, the surface of the inner layer must be at least partially defluorinated.

Claims 6, 9, 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mang in view of Vassiliou and further in view of Fisher et al., US 6,390,141.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. The fact that Fisher discloses a pipe having an inner fluoropolymer layer in which at least one concentric outer layer is reinforced adds nothing to Mang and/or Vassiliou in rendering the present claims obvious. There is nothing in any of the cited patents regarding cementing pigmented fluoropolymers to an outer concentric layer, much less the requirement for at least partial defluorination of the pigmented fluoropolymer prior to cementing.

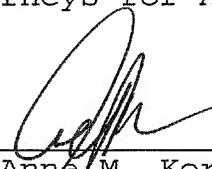
In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are now in condition for allowance, and favorable action thereon is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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